

Mabutas, Maria

From: Francesca Vietor [francesca@igc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2010 11:35 AM
To: ewg@ewg.org; mark@markhertsgaard.com
Cc: Harrington, Ed
Subject: Re: Ken, please correct EWG's continuing misinformation

What? This is crazy. After Stauber first contacted me in early FEB (pls see my Feb 8 e-mail to Ed Harrington asking him to respond to Stauber), Ed and I talked on the phone and he agreed the PUC would suspend the giveaway and do comprehensive, comparative testing. This is what the petition asked for and the PUC responded.

Am I missing something?

Francesca

Dear Ken,

You wrote to me yesterday in an email that your Environmental Working Group (EWG) is committed to permanently ending the give-away of sewage sludge to gardeners in San Francisco, saying: "EWG will certainly do what we can to help make sure that suspension is permanent."

Great, welcome to the battle. I hope this also means you are committed to forcing the city officials to clean up the gardens that they have contaminated since 2007 with toxic sewage sludge. Those are my goals and the goals of the Organic Consumers Association.

However, I am forced to question your sincerity, integrity and grasp of this issue, since in your email to me you contradict yourself on a very important matter in this battle. You claim that you won't correct the inaccurate statement in your April 1, 2010, EWG news release claiming that "immediately after [SFPUC Vice President] Vietor became aware of the [give-away of toxic sludge] practice, she raised questions about it with the appropriate SFPUC staff. Shortly thereafter, distribution of the sludge compost was halted."

This inaccurate statement of yours suspiciously echoes an inaccurate statement in the the Chez Panisse Foundation news release of the same day from Alice Waters and Francesca Vietor. Their news release states: "as soon as Mr. Stauber brought the program to her attention, [SFPUC Vice President] Ms. Vietor asked the staff of the SFPUC to do three things: 1. Put the program on indefinite hold until sound scientific data can be gathered and evaluated; ...".

As our mutual friend Hugh Kaufman pointed out to you last week, the toxic sludge give-away was temporarily suspended by the SFPUC in the face of the March 4, 2010, protest at City Hall by the Organic Consumers Association (OCA), and the formal letter OCA delivered to Mayor Newsom requesting a halt to the give-away program.

OCA was representing hundreds of thousands of constituents as well as Bay Area and national organizations including Consumers Union and many others who signed the formal letter they delivered to Mayor Newsom. It should be noted that SFPUC Vice President Francesca Vietor formally declined on February 10, 2010, in an email to OCA's John Mayer and on behalf of Chez Panisse Foundation, to sign this letter to Mayor Newsom.

It was reported on the morning of March 4, 2010, in a article by Chris Roberts in the San Francisco Appeal

5/17/2010

DUPLICATE
NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD

that the San Francisco toxic sludge give-away program was temporarily halted:

<[<http://sfappeal.com/news/2010/03/farmers-call-pucs-shit-will.php>]

As Hugh Kaufman also pointed out to you, SFPUC Vice President Vietor told me in an email that she had been, and would be now and in the future, too busy to focus on the SFPUC toxic sludge give-away program because of her new job (as Executive Director of the Chez Panisse Foundation) and because of other pressing SFPUC business.

Incredulously, after you state to me that SFPUC Vice President Francesca Vietor stopped the program as a result of my March email to her, you then state as fact an entirely different and conflicting scenario. This new and conflicting scenario falsely claims that the September, 2009, petition filed with the SFPUC by Andy Kimbrell's Center for Food Safety (CFS) stopped the toxic sludge give-away program. You write, "My hat is off, as I'm sure yours is, to Andy Kimbrell for the advocacy package that brought SF's 'organic biosolids' giveaway to a halt."

Your statement, as you must know, is in conflict with the statement of the CFS attorney working on this case, Paige Tomaselli, who acknowledged that the SFPUC turned down the CFS petition in November, 2009.

The SFPUC denial of the CFS petition received national media attention on December 1, 2009, in The Atlantic. Here is that article below. Note that this article documents that after the CFS petition was denied in November, 2009, the SFPUC announced that far from ending the program it would **expand the toxic sludge give-away ten-fold**.

< <http://www.theatlantic.com/food/archive/2009/12/free-compost-or-toxic-sludge/31024/> >

Again, while we welcome your belated joining of this battle to permanently stop the give-away of toxic sludge to gardeners and homeowners, we are concerned about your credibility when in just one email to me you provide false and conflicting information, on its face, about this important issue.

Ken, If you join this battle you and EWG must be credible and this is not credible.

Sincerely,

John Stauber, Advisory Board, OCA

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* "We would accomplish many more things if we did not think of them as impossible."

Vince Lombardi